IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 23 and 28-44 as follows. Please cancel claims 24 and 26 without prejudice or disclaimer. Please add new claims 45 and 46 as follows.

Claims 1-22. (Cancelled).

23. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for charging for services in a communication system supporting a Diameter IP protocol,~~ comprising:

receiving a request to establish an internet protocol (IP) session from a user of ~~the~~ a communication system supporting a diameter IP protocol; ~~and~~

initiating an account with an account controller of the system, wherein the ~~step of~~ initiating ~~an account~~ comprises transferring sponsorship information to a charging system from an application server, said sponsorship information being provided to enable shared charging, the charging system being responsible for monitoring of the account; ~~the method further comprising~~

establishing the IP session; and

initiating the monitoring of the account responsive to an account request message from said account controller to obtain a final tariff.

Claim 24. (Canceled).

25. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 23 wherein the account is initiated responsive to an account request message.

Claim 26. (Canceled).

27. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 23 wherein the sponsorship information is defined by at least one attribute value pair.

28. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 27 ~~wherein there is provided~~ further comprising providing an attribute value pair defining shared charging information.

29. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 27 ~~wherein there is provided~~ further comprising providing an attribute value pair defining shared percentage information.

30. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 27 ~~wherein there is provided~~ further comprising providing an attribute value pair defining shared amount information.

31. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 27 ~~wherein there is provided~~ further comprising providing an attribute value pair defining a sponsor identity.

32. (Currently Amended) A communication system ~~supporting a Diameter IP protocol~~ comprising:

a control function ~~means adapted~~ configured to initiate an internet protocol (IP) session for a user of the system, wherein the system supports a diameter IP protocol;

an application server ~~for providing~~ configured to provide an application for a user of the system in an IP session;

an account controller ~~for initiating~~ configured to initiate an account;

a charging unit configured to charge ~~means for charging~~ an IP session for a user, wherein the charging unit is configured to receive ~~means receives~~ sponsorship information to enable shared charging from the application server on initiation of the account, and is configured to monitor the account responsive to an account request message from said control function to obtain a final tariff ~~on initiation of the account, and is responsible for monitoring of the account~~.

33. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 32 wherein the control function comprises ~~means is~~ a serving call state control function.

34. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 32 wherein the charging unit ~~means~~ comprises an on-line charging function and an off-line charging function.

35. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 32, wherein the charging is initiated on the basis of a ~~Diameter~~ diameter IP communication between the call control function and the charging unit ~~means~~.

36. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 32, wherein shared charging information is communicated to the charging unit ~~means~~ from the application function on the basis of a ~~Diameter~~ diameter IP communication.

37. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 32, wherein the charging unit ~~means monitors~~ is configured to monitor the call session charges responsive to a ~~Diameter~~ diameter IP communication from the call control function.

38. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 32 wherein the ~~Diameter~~ diameter protocol is ~~adapted~~ configured to define at least one attribute value pair to define sponsorship information.

39. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 38 wherein the attribute value pair ~~defines~~ is configured to define shared charging information.

40. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 38 wherein the attribute value pair ~~defines~~ is configured to define shared percentage information.

41. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 38 wherein the attribute value pair ~~defines~~ is configured to define shared amount information.

42. (Currently Amended) A communication system according to claim 38 wherein the attribute value pair ~~defines~~ is configured to define a sponsor identity.

43. (Currently Amended) A ~~Diameter~~ diameter ~~IP~~ internet protocol (IP) ~~adapted~~ configured to define at least one attribute value pair to define sponsorship information.

44. (Currently Amended) A ~~Diameter~~ diameter IP protocol according to claim 43 wherein the sponsorship information is provided to enable shared charging.

45. (New) An apparatus comprising:

a receiver configured to receive a request to establish an internet protocol (IP) session from a user of a communication system supporting a diameter IP protocol;

an initiating unit configured to initiate an account with an account controller of the system, wherein the initiating comprises transferring sponsorship information to enable shared charging from the application to a charging system, the charging system being responsible for monitoring of the account; and

an establishing unit configured to establish the IP session and to send an account request message to obtain a final tariff to a charging system, thereby to initiate the monitoring of the account.

46. (New) An apparatus comprising:

receiving means for receiving a request to establish an internet protocol (IP) session from a user of a communication system supporting a diameter IP protocol;

initiating means for initiating an account with an account controller of the system, wherein the initiating means comprises means for transferring sponsorship information to enable shared charging from an application server to a charging system, the charging system being responsible for monitoring of the account;

establishing means for establishing the IP session; and

sending means for sending an account request message to obtain a final tariff to a charging system, thereby to initiate the monitoring of the account.